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one taste: (n)ever-changing

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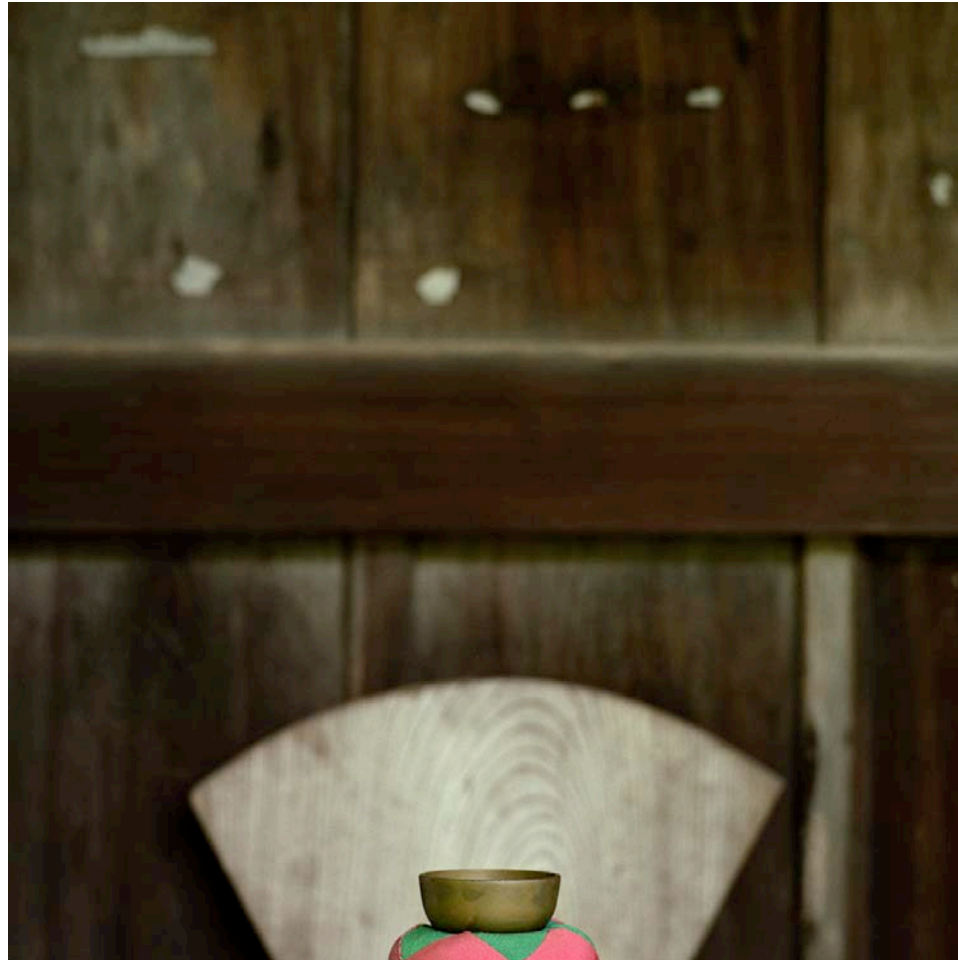
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eca

one taste: (n)ever-changing

Portfolio submission ref 2014 David Williams



The Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation London

The Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation is one of the leading Japanese cultural and artistic centres in the UK and indeed internationally. It is renowned for its consistently excellent programme of events and is a major contributor to the support of closer links between Britain and Japan via an extensive variety grants, awards and prizes.

As a Western artist, I was honoured to be invited to exhibit work undertaken in Japan at Daiwa. I was also invited to deliver a public lecture in association with my work.

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The photographic images on display at Daiwa were edited from an extended, ongoing body of work with the overarching title, 'one taste: (n)ever-changing'. This project began in 2003 and was completed in late 2007. It comprises several, discrete, yet inter-related elements and has been variously supported by the AHRC, Nozomi (the eca, Japan-linked research centre) Carnegie Trust, Sun Chlorella Corporation (Kyoto), Weissraum Gallery, Kyoto and the eca Research Board.

All of the work was made at Buddhist Temple sites in Kyoto. A major aim of the project is to fuse elements of Eastern thinking with strategies of presentation more commonly found in Western contemporary art, such as seriality and typology.

The two project components on show at Daiwa were

1. 21 images from the series, **88 Places** (from 'one taste: (n)ever-changing' (2003-2007)
2. 8 images, complete series, **Tofuku-ji Zen Temple** (from 'one taste: (n)ever-changing' 2003-2007)

Component 1 had not been exhibited/published prior to the current REF cycle. Extracts from component 2 were exhibited/published during the last cycle of the RAE, but this work acquired more contextual significance when exhibited in tandem with component one.

Background Information, Component 1

Component 1, **88 Places** in its entirety consists of 88 images made at each of the 88 Omuro Ninna-ji Temples (Shingon) in Kyoto. Fig. 1 and 2 are documentary images intended to provide some sense of the scale and architecture of these temples. These temples, small hut-like constructions, represent a version in miniature of their 88, much larger and more widely known counterparts on the South Western Japanese Island of Shikoku. These were constructed in 900-1400AD. To undertake the 1,200 kilometre, 88 Temple pilgrimage on Shikoku by foot, takes between 40-60 days. By contrast, the 88 Omuro Temples (built in 1824) are located on a forested hillside in North West Kyoto and visitors can complete the course between 2-4hrs.

There are several explanations as to why there should be precisely '88' Temples (which some Japanese refer to as '88 Places' but one of the most prevalent is that this number is derived from the 88 human desires as identified by Kobo Dashi, the Shingon saint who inspired the construction of the Shikoku Temples.



Fig 1 Omuro #3



Fig 2 Omuro #29

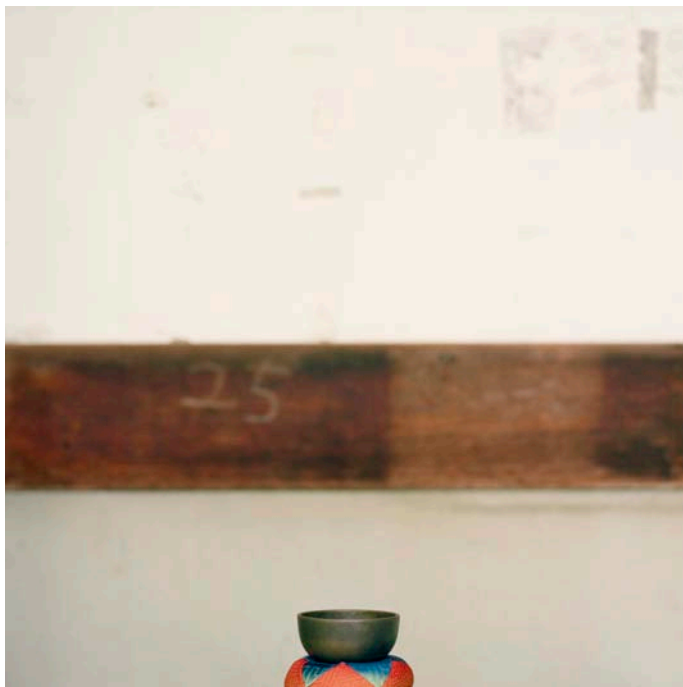


Fig 3 #25

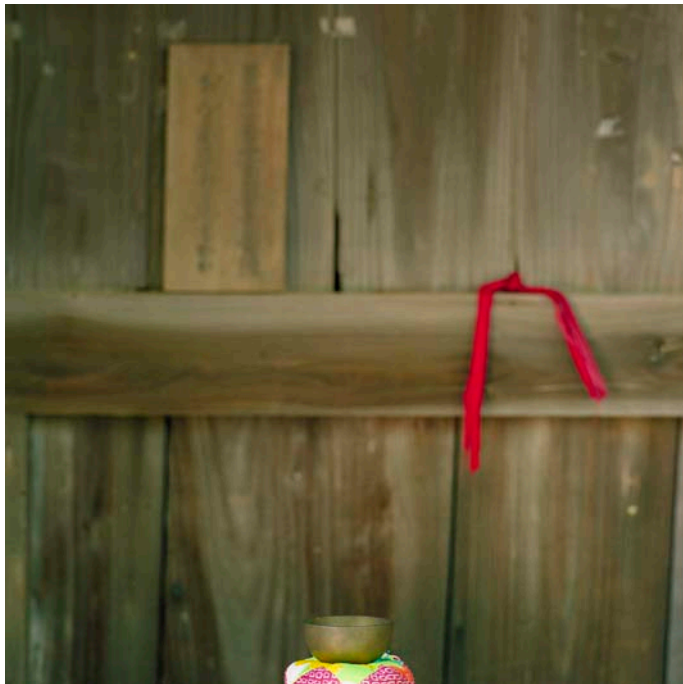


Fig 5 #44

In undertaking the course, pilgrims seek to purify such desires through acts of devotion or prayer, often in the form of mantra performed at each site. On arrival at each temple, visitors strike the Orin with a small wooden stick to signal the beginning of Their devotions, recite prayers, and strike the Orin again at the end to signify closure. The pilgrimage is also regarded as particularly appropriate for healing and for those who have suffered loss due to bereavement.

Methodology/Methods

Essentially, this work explores the notion of non – duality – oneness. It seeks to undermine inter-related dualistic concepts of ‘time’, ‘space’ and ‘self’ as the latter relates to authorship. Its aim is to function as a form of ‘visual mantra’ and strictly adhered to shooting methodologies are signal in this respect. The intention is to provide a sense of something which apparently changes but in essence remains the same.

Consequently, each Orin was photographed under identical lighting conditions at exactly the same distance from the camera and was exactly the same distance from the temple background. Camera aperture was identical throughout providing both consistent levels of sharpness on the bells in the foreground and the same degree of ‘out- of- focusness’ of the backgrounds. All of which alludes to the notion of *‘one taste: (n)ever-changing’*.

The sensibility here owes much to similar ‘serial’ approaches adopted in musical composition by artists such as Philip Glass and Steve Reich. As an ex professional composer myself I am intrigued by the possibilities of such inter-disciplinary cross-fertilisation.



Fig 4 #28

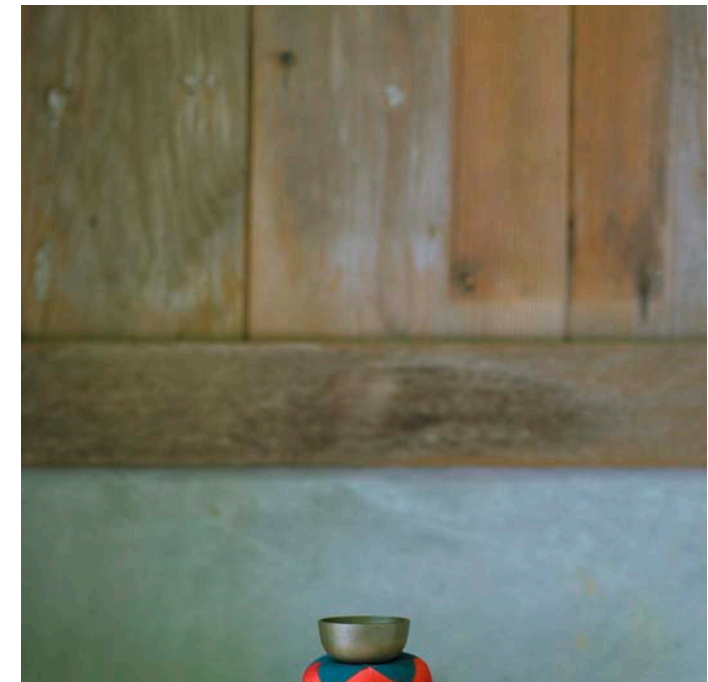


Fig 6 #72

Component 2

Tofuku-ji Zen Temple

Methodolgy/Methods

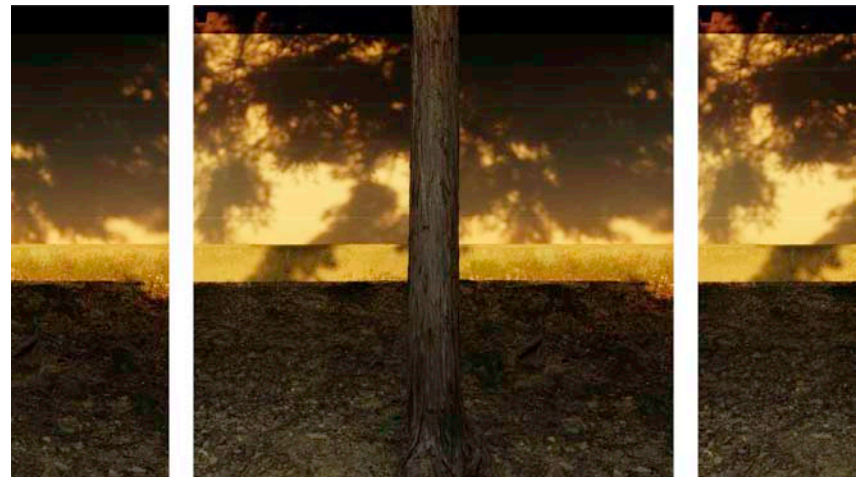
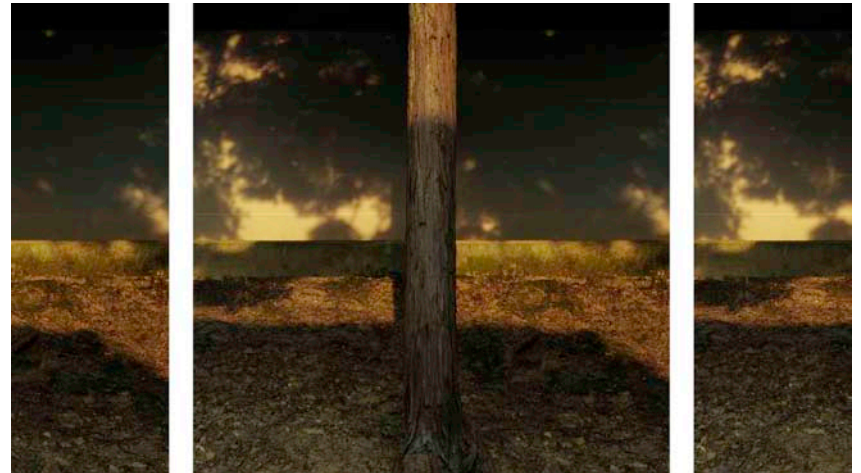
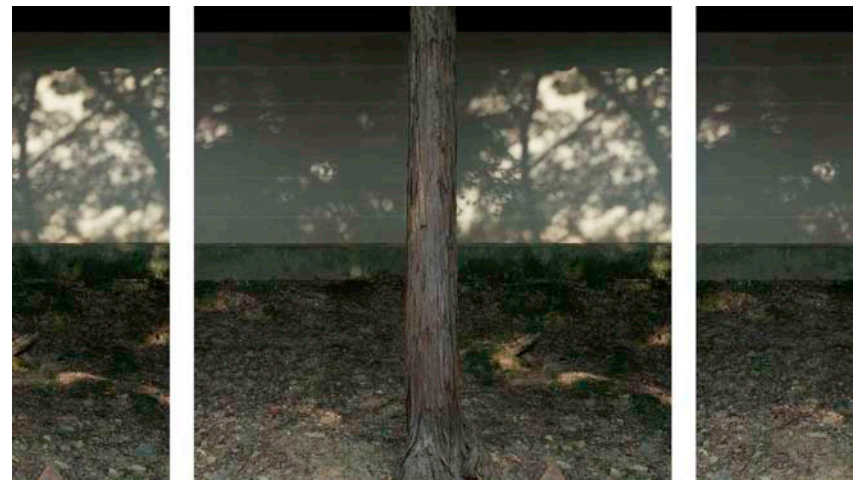
Component 2, consists of the complete series of 8 photographic triptychs. It features a cedar tree, shot from a fixed vantage point throughout a single day from dawn to dusk.

Again a typological approach was adopted in the context of exploring non-duality, but in this series the images are 'fractured'. Consequently, elements of repetition are in evidence, not only from one triptych to the next, but also within each piece itself:

'Williams has created these triptychs by isolating the sections of each image to the left and right of the tree trunk and reproducing these scenes as flanking panels. But, in each case, the section that sits to the right of the trunk is reproduced as the left hand panel while the section to the left of the trunk is presented as the right hand panel. The linear progression, the sense of time unfolding, is made to turn back on itself so that present, past and future become one '(n)ever-changing' thing.'

Tom Normand / Portfolio #39

(opposite from top #2/#4/#5 from series Tofuku-ji Zen Temple)

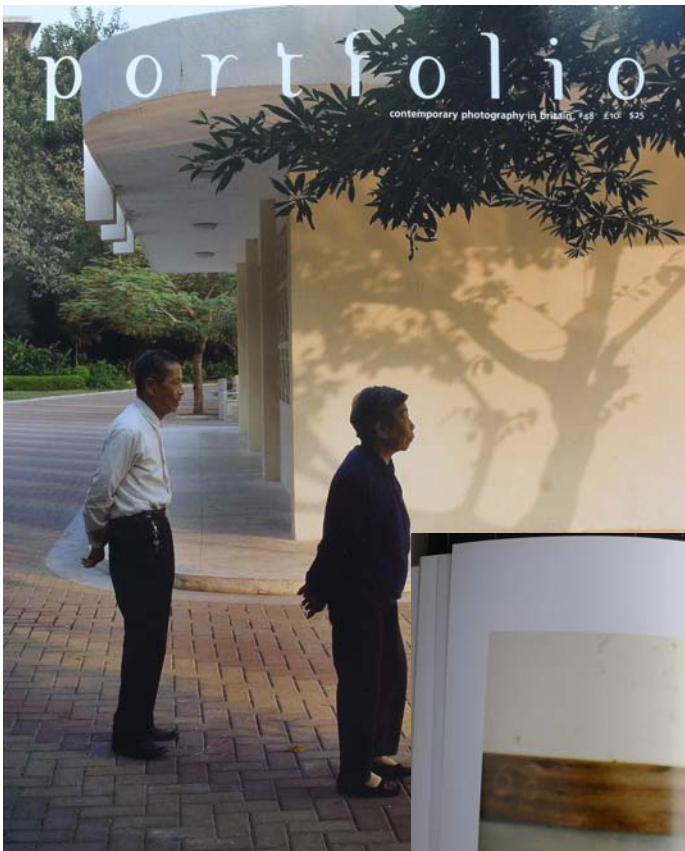


The Exhibition (1)



The Exhibition (2)





Nana Shiomi - *Looking into the Mirror Pond* 20 January - 18 March

Nana Shiomi makes contemporary woodblock prints, often using traditional Japanese staves. The printing technique is based on the traditional Japanese way of printing, but with new materials and tools.



David Williams - *one taste: (n)ever-changing* 24 March - 12 May

Over recent years, Edinburgh-based photographer David Williams has established growing links with Japan, increasingly producing a variety of projects (from, most notably, the extended study of work, see *one taste: (n)ever-changing* 2005-2007). This project explores the theme of 'one taste' (ichibu no aji) within the context of contemporary visual art practices and was undertaken at a number of Buddhist temples in Kyoto.



"For me, it is a duty that the practice of promoting does not end, and yet there remains an ongoing and ongoing that the duty is not a duty, but a duty." - David Williams

Chair of BA, Professor Emerita, Royal College of Art



one taste: (n)ever-changing Photographs by David Williams

24 March - 12 May, 2010
Monday - Friday, 9.30am - 5.00pm (excluding Bank Holidays)

Edinburgh-based photographic artist, David Williams, is showing work from his *one taste: (n)ever-changing* series in London for the first time. He has exhibited extensively in a range of international galleries including Chisenhall, Houston, Farnham, Ingleby Gallery (Edinburgh), National Galleries of Scotland, and Photographers' Gallery (London).

Invitation to Private View - Please reply to exhibitions@daif.org.uk
Tuesday 30 March, 6pm-8pm
Introduction by David Williams, Director, Tames Photography Fund from 5.30pm

Talk - Same Differences: Non-Duality and the Serial by David Williams
Wednesday 27 April, 6pm-8pm
Admission free, booking essential (www.daif.org.uk/booking)

Daiwa Foundation Japan House
12-14 Cornhill Terrace, London NW1 4BP
020-7460-4340
www.daif.org.uk
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From the series, *one taste: (n)ever-changing*, 2005-7 © David Williams

The Daiwa Anglo-Japanese
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